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STATE FOR WHA/CEN, WHA/PPC, WHA/USOAS, AND DRL/PHD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CEN AND DCHA/DG

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SUBJECT: HONDURAN ELECTIONS NEWS: UPDATE 4

REF: (A) Tegucigalpa 1949

(B) Tegucigalpa 1680

(C) Tegucigalpa 1665

Police and TSE Sign Agreement For Election Security

[11.](#) Minister of Public Security Oscar Alvarez, and the authorities of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) signed an agreement on details of the security of elections November 27. Magistrate Saul Escobar stated that this agreement defines clearly the participation of the police in the process and how both institutions will create regulations to make sure everyone knows how to deal with specific situations as they come up. Under the agreement police will be able to enter a voting area any time a person creates an incident, threatens public order, or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. A majority of the electoral table would have to make the request for police intervention. However, at least three political parties have questioned the Minister of Public Security's (and Minister of Defense's) participation as a member of the Political Commission of the National Party, which creates a potential conflict of interest with his role in this agreement and the electoral process in general. The issue remains unresolved.

Cost of General Elections Rises to 180 Million Lempiras

[12.](#) The estimated cost of the seventh general elections in Honduras has risen to 180 million lempiras (over USD 9.5 million). Some 75 percent of this cost will be footed by the GOH, while the other 25 percent will be footed by international donors. Part of the additional cost is due to the creation of the departmental and municipal electoral tribunals, which according to the Electoral Law must function until December 27, a month after the general elections take place. The Secretary of the TSE said that the departmental and municipal tribunals employ over 2,000 people and they absorb some 40 million lempiras (over USD 2.1 million) in salaries

TSE Removes 9,000 Military From Voting List

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[13.](#) The Honduran Armed Forces have sent an official list to the TSE submitting of approximately 9,000 members of the military who are constitutionally precluded from voting or running for office in the general elections. A similar number of police officers have also been excluded.

Congressional Candidates Create Combos to Save Money

[14.](#) Of the 128 congressional seats, 108 congressmen are seeking reelection to Congress. With none of the candidates (newcomers or incumbents) ever having run for Congress on their own (as opposed to being on a party list) in a general election, name recognition is key. Due to the high cost of campaigning, especially advertising, many candidates are forming "publicity combos" (groups of usually five to eight congressional candidates paying for joint campaign ads). While the combo is designed to save money, many party leaders fear its effect on overall party success. The National Party has barred combos fearing they will reduce the number of voters who vote for the entire party slate.

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